

Vetch went to arrange some means of communication between them; but when he reached Boston, early in July, the fleet had not yet arrived. After many weary weeks of waiting, instead of a fleet a solitary vessel entered the harbor, a dispatch boat bringing the disheartening news that no English fleet was coming at all. The conduct of the war on the Spanish peninsula having gone against the Portuguese, the allies of England, the destination of the promised squadron with its five regiments of regulars had been changed from Boston to Lisbon.* In September, 1709, this news reached the colonial camp on Wood Creek, in the wilderness of northern New York. Of necessity the expedition against Canada was at an end. The aimless waiting had already depleted the ranks of the little army, and some intentional or unintentional defilement of the waters of the creek near its source had caused a frightful rate of mortality. By October 5 the forces had dwindled down to a mere handful, and these now abandoned the camp and returned to their homes.

With nothing accomplished and after expenses incurred that far exceeded their means, the people of the northern colonies were confronted with the burden of an oppressive debt, in addition to the still threatening perils of French and Indian atrocities. In spite of this almost ridiculous failure, however, Col. Schuyler was determined to force the Canadian, or the French and Indian, question upon the attention of the English court. "I hold it my duty toward God and my neighbor," he had said, "to prevent, if possible, these barbarous and heathen cruelties." At the end of this same year (1709) he took with him to England, at his own expense, five chiefs of the Five Nations.

In London, amid the gaze of crowds, dressed in English smallclothes of black, with scarlet ingrain cloth mantles edged with gold for their blankets, they were conducted in coaches to an audience with Queen Anne, to whom they gave belts of wampum and avowed their readiness to take up the hatchet for the reduction of Canada.†

To this effective expedient on the part of the indefatigable Schuyler we may doubtless trace the better-sustained attempts against Canada of subsequent years, finally resulting in its complete reduction under the empire of Great Britain.‡

* "An Acadian Governor," as cited, p. 495, note.

† Baneroff, "History United States" (ed. 1883), I: 199.

‡ In recognition of his noble services in this connection and to com-